

BOUDIN

IMPRESSIONIST MARINE PAINTINGS



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■ BY PETER C. SUTTON ■

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BOUDIN

IMPRESSIONIST MARINE PAINTINGS

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BOUDIN

IMPRESSIONIST MARINE PAINTINGS

BY PETER C. SUTTON

Guest Curator, Peabody Museum of Salem
Mrs. Russell W. Baker Curator of European Paintings,
Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

With an historical essay by DANIEL FINAMORE,
Associate Curator of Maritime History,
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COVER: Detail from Plate XVIII, *The Outer Port of Le Havre*, see page 64

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CONTENTS

FOREWORD		vii
By Peter Fetchko		
THE ESSAYS		
Maritime Normandy		11
By Daniel Finamore		
Louis Eugène Boudin: The Artist		15
By Peter C. Sutton		
THE PLATES		
I.	Harbor View (Isabey)	30
II.	On the Cliff (Troyon)	32
III.	River Landscape with Houses and Bridge	34
IV.	Harbor Scene in Holland (Jongkind)	36
V.	Harbor by Moonlight (Jongkind)	38
VI.	Quay at Honfleur	40
VII.	Fashionable Figures on the Beach	42
VIII.	The Outer Port, Le Havre	44
IX.	Portrieux, Low Tide	46
X.	Fashionable Figures at the Beach	48
XI.	Harbor at Trouville	50
XII.	Port, Brittany	52
XIII.	Ships in a Harbor (Monet)	54
XIV.	Port Scene	56
XV.	The Inlet at Berck	58
XVI.	Washerwomen beside the Bridge over the River Touques	60
XVII.	Trouville, The Jetties, Low Tide	62
XVIII.	The Outer Port of Le Havre	64
IXX.	Le Havre, Ships at a Dock	66
XX.	Vessel at Low Tide	68
XXI.	Harbor Scene	70
XXII.	Entry to the Port of Saint-Valéry-sur-Somme	72
XXIII.	Quay at Villefranche	74
XXIV.	Trouville, Low Tide	76
XXV.	Venice, Santa Maria della Salute from San Giorgio	78
XXVI.	The Marshes at Deauville	80
BIBLIOGRAPHIES		83
EXHIBITIONS OF BOUDIN'S WORKS		84



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FOREWORD

Jan Fontein, former Director and Asian Art Curator at the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, with his characteristic good humor and somewhat mischievous smile, more than once expressed his affection for the Peabody Museum of Salem. He often brought guests and foreign dignitaries to East India Marine Hall to see our collections and a "Rembrandt" of which he was particularly fond. It was not chauvinism or art historical scholarship which stimulated his interest, for the Peabody Museum's "Rembrandt" was of wood, carved in some imagined likeness of the painter, that once graced the bow of a ship that traced lines of commerce across the sea in the nineteenth century. Ah, you say, that makes sense, for why would the Peabody Museum have a Rembrandt unless it pertained to the sea?

A similar reasoning, I am sure, occurred between Peter Sutton, Curator of European Paintings at Boston's Museum of Fine Arts, and his friend William Guenther, both of Salem, when discussing, as friends and neighbors are wont to do in convivial settings and late at night, the Impressionist French marine painter Eugène Boudin. Boudin's paintings of ships, harbors, and beaches, his role as mentor of Claude Monet, and his time spent at sea suggested to them the potential of an exhibit that would have particular meaning if held at the Peabody Museum. The three-month exhibit "Boudin: Impressionist Marine Paintings" opened in Salem on June 6, 1991. We are grateful to both of them for their inspiration and their subsequent hard work. In particular, our thanks go to Peter Sutton, author of this catalogue, for his scholarly yet lively product.

Consul-General of France Laurent Rapin and Noelle de Chambrun, French Cultural Attaché of the French Cultural Services, enthusiastically embraced the exhibit and provided material support, encouragement, and helpful contacts.

We are extremely grateful to the IBM Corporation for its generous support, which made this catalogue a reality. IBM is deserving of its position as one of the great supporters of art and culture in America.

Paper Sources International of New Jersey donated the paperstock for the catalogue, which was printed by Nimrod Press of Boston. Other contributors to the exhibition and catalogue include Grantham, Mayo, and Van Otterloo, Boston; Issues Management, Inc., Boston; and New England Telephone. We are grateful to the Raytheon Company, Coopers & Lybrand, New England Power Service, Polaroid Corporation, and Loomis Sayles for their welcome support.

Our special thanks go to Mrs. John Wilson, William Loring, and Richard Wheatland II. We owe a great debt to Mrs. Helen Blodgett for her

help in organizing support for the exhibition, to Mrs. Elizabeth Moseley for her special efforts, and to all the other committee members—including William Guenther, Kevin Harrington, Richard Hill, Tom Bleasdale, Mrs. Iskuhi Puhl, William Bursaw, Jr., Neil St. John Raymond, Stephen Kasnet, and Eyk Van Otterloo—for their involvement in and contributions to the exhibition. Special thanks are due also to the City of Salem and its genial mayor, Neil Harrington.

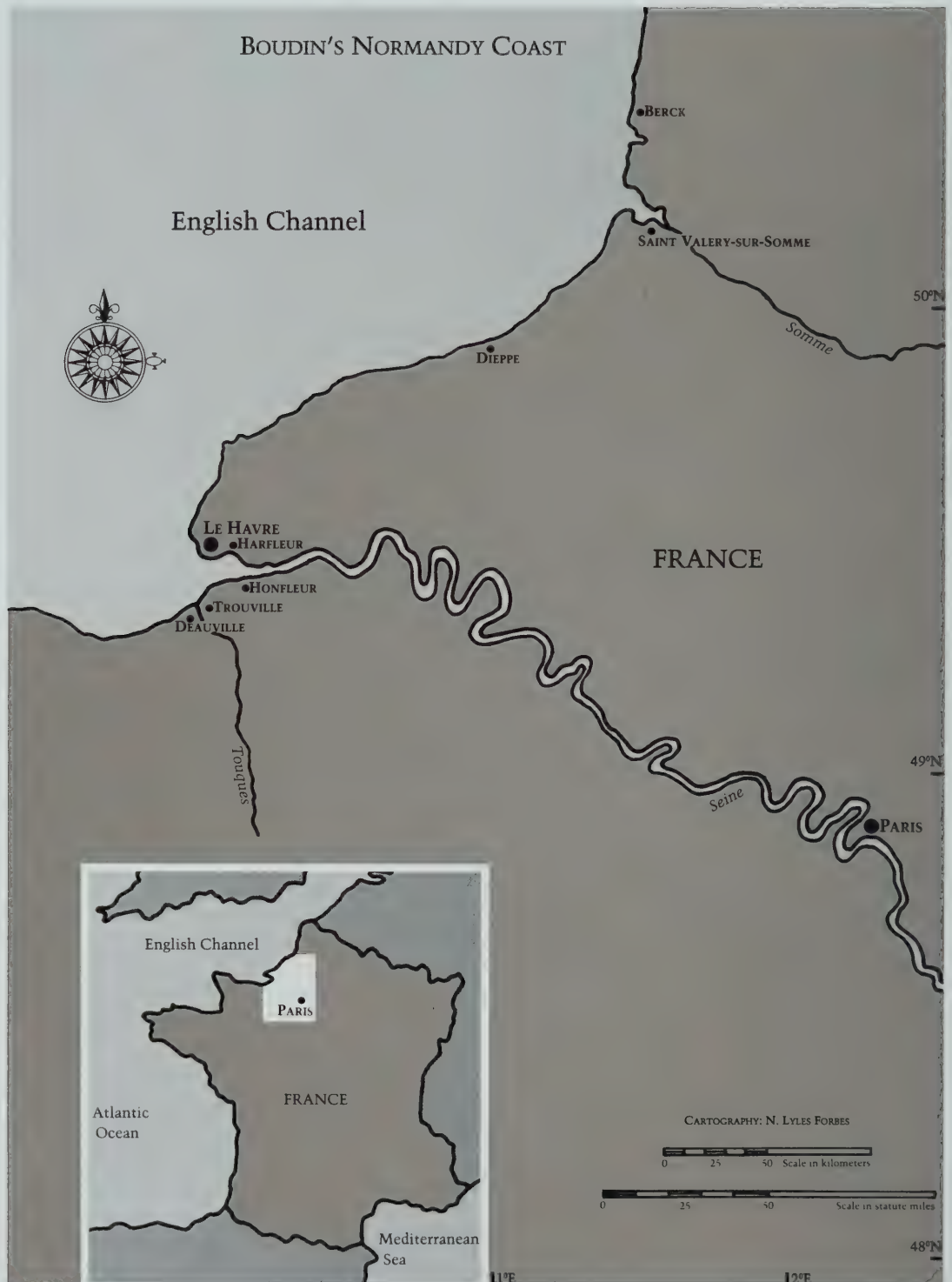
We are most grateful for support from a number of other individuals, including Mr. and Mrs. Richard D. Hill; Mr. and Mrs. Mark Blodgett; Mr. and Mrs. Ronald L. Rossetti; Mr. and Mrs. Caleb Loring, Jr.; Mr. and Mrs. Frederick S. Moseley III; Mr. John and Dr. Catherine Lastavica; Mr. and Mrs. George Putnam; Mr. and Mrs. Henry S. Streeter; Mr. and Mrs. I.W. Colburn; Mr. and Mrs. Albert M. Creighton, Jr.; Mrs. Elizabeth Laughlin; Mr. Eliot B. Payson; Mr. and Mrs. John R. Pingree; Mr. and Mrs. Roger A. Saunders; Mr. and Mrs. Edward C. Shotwell III; and Mr. and Mrs. Richard S. West. Thanks also go to Mr. and Mrs. Paul Perkins, Jr.; Mr. and Mrs. Edward S. Rowland; the Honorable and Mrs. William L. Saltonstall; Mr. and Mrs. Frederick Kauders; Mr. and Mrs. Henry A. Laughlin, Jr.; Mr. Richard L. Hall; and Mr. and Mrs. Charles P. Rimmer, Jr.

Peter Sutton received invaluable assistance in preparing the pictures and manuscript for the catalogue from the staff of the Museum of Fine Arts, including Marci Rockoff, Regina Rudser, Katherine Rothkopf, Janice Sorkow, Andrew Haines, Sue Reed, John Lutsch, Paul Pietal, Brigitte Smith, Jean Woodward, Irene Konefal, Rhona MacBeth, and Kim Pashko. For their timely and willing help, many thanks. All color plate photographs are courtesy of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

Many members of the staff of the Peabody Museum played major roles in bringing about the exhibition and the catalogue. Daniel Finamore, Associate Curator of Maritime History, provided a lively essay for the catalogue, establishing the maritime historical and geographical context for Boudin's life and work. Anna L. Geraghty designed the catalogue, which was edited by Catherine Degnon and coordinated by Donald Marshall and William Barton. Thanks also go to Fredrick MacDougall Johnson, Paul Winfisky, Lyles Forbes, Anne Mason, Janet Halpin, and Lucinda Kidder Wilkins for their assistance with the project.

PETER FETCHKO
DIRECTOR
PEABODY MUSEUM OF SALEM

THE ESSAYS



MARITIME NORMANDY

By Daniel Finamore

The rough tidal channel that separates the British Isles from the European mainland is historically one of the most heavily traveled waterways in the world. It was from the town of Saint-Valéry on the river Somme that in 1066 William departed to conquer England. Farther south, at the outlet of the Seine, the port of Honfleur served as the primary entrepôt of Paris from the eleventh to the eighteenth century and was the focus of numerous battles during the Hundred Years War of 1337 to 1453. Great moments in history notwithstanding, the channel coast of northwest France whose bustling ports provided Eugène Boudin with a lifetime's worth of subjects for his work is not an easily negotiated waterway. Navigating is difficult where tides average 15 to 24 feet and unpredictable flows and eddies of channel water are created as the wave of flood tide passes through narrow areas to be released in broader zones like the Bay of the Seine, compounded by such visual obstructions as sea fog in summer and land fog in winter. In addition, the gradually sloping sand beaches that are continuously replenished by eroding chalk cliffs limit access for larger vessels to only a handful of deepwater ports located at the outlets of the larger rivers. These are the ports from which France's manufacturing, agricultural, and fishing industries were plugged into the world economy.

The distribution of agricultural products from Normandy's farmers to English consumers across the channel operated from a variety of French seaports. In small ports with restricted harbors, such as Saint-Valéry with its wide tidal mud flats, the exportation of farm products represented a major portion of the community's economic base. In large towns, such as Le Havre with its modern waterfront facilities and deepwater anchorages, the exportation of agricultural goods represented only a portion of the international trade under weigh. But from both, poultry, eggs, vegetables, and fruit, as well as the Camembert, Liverot, and Pont l'Eveque cheeses and other dairy products for which the region is famous, made the daily transit to English tables, resulting in a lucrative export trade for the Normanders.

Manufacturing dominated the industries of the channel coast; hence, manufactured goods also formed a large portion of the imports and exports that passed through the ports of Normandy. The trade was not one-sided; Normandy's ancient textile industry required regular importation, mostly through Le Havre, of the raw materials used in the manufacture of cotton, wool, and silk fabrics. Daily shipping operations included a coastal trade in raw wool and a transatlantic trade from the southern American states and Caribbean colonies in cotton and valuable dyewoods.

A prosperous shipbuilding industry also operated from the ports at the mouth of the Seine, centered around Honfleur and Le Havre. Commodities associated with ship construction—timber for hulls, masts, and

spars—and raw materials for such auxiliary manufactories as ropeworks, sawmills, and iron foundries tended to dominate imports at these ports. A minor timber trade also flourished at ports such as Trouville, where shipyard construction was oriented toward supplying the local demand for smaller fishing craft.

Normandy's mariners profited from a variety of fisheries, including the offshore lobster and oyster beds and the channel herring, sardine, and mackerel runs. The specialized lugsail rig characteristic of the two-masted Havre trawler and three-masted *chasse marée* (literally, tide chaser) employed in the coastwise trade and channel fisheries was developed for waterways where strong tidal currents and unpredictable weather patterns make navigation tricky. Specialized features of the Normandy coaster include highly peaked square-cut lugsails on the fore and main masts, both with topsails, a bumpkin for control of the mizzen sail, a jib of roughly equilateral form, and sometimes an outer jib on a jibboom. This configuration offers a sailplan large enough for trawling in light winds, but easily reducible when working the fishing nets or sailing in heavy weather. The Normandy three-masters often possessed a large crutch running transverse before the mizzen mast to hold the main mast, which can be lowered when fishing. The two-masters have boomed mainsails on the aft-raking main mast instead of a mizzen mast. Larger barkentines, and later schooners, worked the Grand Banks cod fishery, a centuries-old tradition where vessels out of ports such as Honfleur would be gone for months, their crews dory fishing or handlining from the deck.

The perpetually crowded harbor basins along the channel coast were indicative of a strong manufacturing industry through the northwestern French lowlands; however, transportation of both raw materials and finished goods was largely dominated by foreign concerns. From at least 1835 when the painter Frederic Roux began meticulously recording the workhorses of the shipping industry entering and leaving Le Havre in the classic broadside perspective of the Mediterranean school, a great proportion of these vessels hailed from the distant American ports of Salem, Boston, and Newburyport. Transatlantic trade of French manufactured goods was controlled by American and British companies and cross-channel shipping by British merchant concerns. This pattern of foreign-dominated shipping developed in the early years of the nineteenth century through an intensive maritime initiative of these two nations. From the 1860s to the 1890s, the French government imposed a series of subsidies, treaties, and preferential port charges, many aimed specifically at protecting its merchant marine, but which actually had the opposite effect, perpetuating foreign domination of French Atlantic shipping throughout the period of Boudin's lifetime.

Sparked by a rapid industrialization associated with Louis Napoleon's ascension to power as Napoleon III, France's overseas trade

quadrupled in value from 1851 to 1869. The removal of both tariff barriers between France and England and of bounties awarded for ship construction in French yards in 1860 had no visible short-term negative effect on French shipping, since 40 percent of French commerce was carried under the French flag in 1865, an all-time high. This figure fell to 27 percent by 1879, however, following the removal of preferential port dues for French-registered ships and a resurgence of the American merchant marine after the American Civil War. By 1895, as much as one-half the income of many of the large French shipping concerns was derived from renewed government subsidies that promoted the construction and use of sail vessels over the by-now far more reliable steam-driven ships.

Whether domestic or foreign in origin, merchant ships along the northwest coast were a symbol of France's agricultural and manufacturing vitality. Boudin's awareness of the level of national pride and the capital invested in France's struggling Atlantic shipping industry shows clearly in the sentiment portrayed in *The Outer Port of Le Havre* (PLATE XVIII), where a classic *chasse marée* has begun maneuvering out to sea, past a massive white-hulled bark moored in mid-harbor, with its French ensign waving boldly.



*Boudin
(1824-98)
at his
easel*



LOUIS EUGENE BOUDIN: THE ARTIST

By Peter C. Sutton

"At the Chase Gallery is a collection of paintings consisting of marines and landscapes by Eugène Boudin (sic). They are remarkable for their simplicity of style and warm gray tones, the sky effects particularly being beautifully executed and very luminous." —Boston Globe, June 1, 1890, p. 22.

"The works of Eugène Boudin, now on exhibition at Chase's Gallery, are remarkably fine examples of one of the strongest of the Impressionist school. He is an impressive painter, relates his incidents in an earnest, frank manner, attains movement, fills every spot with life. True he never smiles, rarely lets in the warm light of the sun, hence his color may be thought severe. But he is a great painter and artist, fills a place, and his work must always be of value."—Franklin T. Robinson, in the Boston Daily Traveler, June 7, 1890, p. 3.

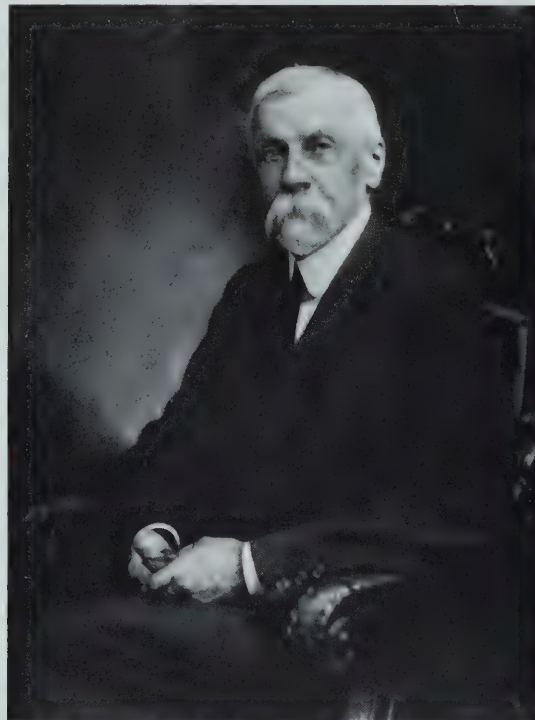
"Artists and students who betake themselves yearly to Gloucester Harbor should see these paintings at once. Boudin does what everyone tries to do with varying success—or, want of it. It is often said that, in our country, we are slow in having good art because we have comparatively little chance to see the best. Here we have the finest possible representation of the subjects which most appeal to the artists of New England and the Middle States."—Boston Post, June 2, 1890, p. 4.

Early in June 1890 the art critics of Boston's eight daily newspapers were filled with accounts of the Museum of Fine Arts acquiring yet a second plaster cast of the Venus de Milo, reports of the jailing in France of an impresario who tried to exhibit a copy of Jean-François Millet's *Angelus* as the original, and scandalized accounts of the desecration with red paint of the statue of John Harvard by undergraduates celebrating sporting victories. There were also extensively detailed and gossipy reports of the recent openings of the Salon and Champs de Mars exhibitions in Paris, with special attention naturally paid to America's entrants. And there were, of course, the seasonal social notes about leading local painters planning art excursions and retreats on the North Shore, the Cape, and points farther afield.

In the midst of the summer diaspora, several critics found time to visit Chase's Gallery where there was a small exhibition held of Eugène Boudin's paintings. Although there were only thirteen paintings in the show, it was the first one-man exhibition of the artist's work held outside Paris, indeed only the fourth show devoted solely to his work that had been mounted anywhere. The Boston critics were unanimous in their praise for Boudin's remarkably fresh seascapes and coastal views. Indeed, the anonymous

reviewer for the *Post* stressed the special pertinence of Boudin's art for local New England marine painters. He claimed that "in the representation of harbor views [Boudin] has no rival. His skies are a joy to see and his vessels always painted with inimitable skill and perfect knowledge. In his pictures there is a [good] deal of movement. One feels the bustle of hurrying out of port, or into it. The vessels sway with wind and tide, and their rigging is drawn with fascinating truth and naiveté." For Boston readers accustomed to at least two pages of their slim dailies being devoted to lists of ships in port and news of the import and export business, such qualities in painting had a special relevance.

*Desmond
Fitzgerald*



The Chase Gallery exhibition had been organized by Boudin's Paris dealer, Paul Durand-Ruel. The show's little brochure included not only a handlist of the paintings but also a brief introduction by Desmond Fitzgerald. A successful civil engineer, Fitzgerald was one of the first Impressionist art collectors in Boston. Together with the well-known Boston woman painter and collector Lilla Cabot Perry, Desmond Fitzgerald became a friend and apostle of the famous Impressionist Claude Monet. He wrote essays about Monet's work and served as an advisor to Boston collectors, notably the Edwards family. In the ample galleries that he created in his Brookline home (which became an essential stop, along with Isabella Stewart Gardner's palazzo on the Fenway, of any tour of Boston's collections),

Fitzgerald hung nine paintings by Monet and seven works by Boudin (including Schmit nos. 2536, 2551, and 2745); as well as paintings by Sisley, Renoir, Degas, Pissarro, and lesser French Impressionists and American paintings by Sargent, Homer, Benson, Macknight, and others. His posthumous sale was held in New York, American Art Association, April 21, 1927. Fitzgerald surely was not the first collector of Boudins in Boston; Henry C. Angell had acquired the lovely scene of an overcast harbor dated 1873 (PLATE XII) and exhibited in Boston only three years after it was painted—probably one of the first Boudins to come ashore in America. However, Fitzgerald was an influential arbiter of Boston taste in the late nineteenth century.

Fitzgerald wrote that Boudin “has been called an artist *sorti de la mer* (risen from the sea).” While this notion has become something of a *topos* in the literature of the artist, Louis Eugène Boudin was indeed the son of a sailor. He was born on July 12, 1824, in Honfleur to a local couple of very modest means. His mother served as a chambermaid on passenger vessels and his father, Léonard-Sebastien Boudin, was a fisherman and skipper of a small cargo boat that carried cider from Honfleur to Rouen. The ten-year-old Boudin became a cabin boy on his father’s vessel, derisively christened *Polichinelle* because of its instability, until (so the story goes) he fell overboard and his frightened mother forbade him to return to sea. Thus concluded Boudin’s brief maritime career.

In 1835 Boudin’s family moved to the bustling port of Le Havre, where Eugène was briefly enrolled in parochial school before leaving permanently at age twelve. The adolescent then went to work for a printer before being employed by a stationer, Alphonse Lemasle, who retained him as his clerk. By age eighteen, Boudin had mastered the business and together with a man named Acher opened his own stationery and art supplies shop in a desirable location on the rue de la Communauté in Le Havre. The shop offered framing services and occasionally exhibited artists’ works in their window. Through this modest service, Boudin met some of the leading artists of his day, including Eugène Isabey, Thomas Couture, Constant Troyon, and J.F. Millet. Boudin was already very active in these years as an amateur draftsman. However, his decision to make a profession as an artist was probably in part thrust upon him; in 1846 his successful association with Acher was disbanded when Boudin was forced to withdraw 2,500 francs from the firm to purchase the services of a substitute for the draft. He thus embarked on what must have been one of the most difficult periods of his life. Living hand to mouth, he made pen, watercolor, and pastel studies of Le Havre’s more picturesque quarters, such as Le Perrey, but found few buyers. In 1847 he wrote in his journal of this labor as “a sincere consolation. It seems one acquits oneself of all debts while working, notwithstanding the result.” Sardonicly he also recorded his few triumphs: “Miracle! Who would have thought it! What a

fortune! Two pictures sold at once. Not for 1000, not for 500 [francs]:... poverty, two pieces for 100 sous!"

In 1847 Boudin escaped to Paris where, like other aspiring painters, he haunted the Louvre, subsequently making copies of seventeenth-century Dutch and Flemish artists (Paulus Potter, Jacob van Ruisdael, Willem van de Velde, Adriaen van Ostade, and David Teniers the Younger) as well as French eighteenth-century painters (François Boucher, Jean Antoine Watteau, Nicholas Lancret, and Joseph Vernet). The storm of the 1848 revolution transformed many artists and blew the impoverished Boudin unexpected good in the form of a job offered by the colorful Baron Taylor, former commissioner of the Comédie-Française who had become inspector general of fine arts during the revolution. The job involved traveling in northern France and Belgium with the sculptor Louis Rochet to promote subscriptions for a lottery benefitting writers and artists.

After returning to Le Havre in 1850 Boudin submitted a petition to the municipal council for a pension to study in Paris; his letters of support were written by Couture and Troyon, both swearing prophetic oaths that Boudin would one day become a great painter. Although the mayor of Le Havre more than once skeptically sought reports on the whereabouts (more often in Normandy than Paris) and productivity of his pensioner, Boudin benefitted from his three years of renewed support at the less-than-princely sum of 1,200F a year. The practice was hardly unprecedented; the city of Cherbourg, for example, had supported the young Millet in a similar fashion. However, at the end of his pension Boudin admitted, "They imagined that I would return after three years of support a phoenix of art; I have returned more perplexed than ever." His self-doubt—a trait that badgered him throughout his career—was abiding and debilitating. He wrote in these years, "I confronted my painting with those of the museum, which consoled me and made me see my faults. . . . My touch is hesitant, my colors are faint, I lack vivacity in my execution. I must begin again."

In 1854 Boudin returned to his native Honfleur and began to devote himself to marine paintings. During these years he sometimes collaborated with a local ship painter named Cassinelli, who was regarded as skilled at painting rigging. These collaborative works initially seem to have brought higher prices than his independent paintings, but Boudin would gradually fashion his own approach to ship painting, which better suited his atmospheric style. Important influences on his art during this decade were the marines and coastal views of Isabey and Troyon (see PLATES I and II) and later the landscapes of Corot, who inspired him to lighten his palette. Boudin traveled in both Normandy and Brittany in these years. During the summer of 1854, he spent several months with Madame (Mère) Toutain at the famous Saint-Siméon farm, which had become a favorite retreat of painters. Four years

later Boudin met a grocer's teenage son, Claude Monet, who was then still working in Le Havre as a caricaturist. Boudin is credited with having been the first to encourage the young artist to attempt landscapes out-of-doors. Monet became extremely fond of Boudin, regarding him as his teacher, and would later claim, "If I have become a painter, it is entirely due to Eugène Boudin." The marine by Monet exhibited here (PLATE XIII) lends support to his hyperbole.

It was a testament to the improving quality of Boudin's art by 1859 that the great and controversial Realist, Gustave Courbet, sought him out in Le Havre after admiring his paintings. The two became great friends, and Boudin took the ebullient Courbet to Honfleur and the Saint-Siméon farm. Courbet in turn introduced Boudin to the poet and critic Charles Baudelaire. When Boudin first exhibited at the Paris Salon in 1859, submitting his *Pilgrimage at Sainte-Anne-La-Palud* (Schmit no. 185, later acquired by the city of Le Havre), Baudelaire drew special attention to Boudin in the review that he wrote for the *Revue Française*. The critic cunningly used Boudin's Salon submission—a rather labored effort that never fully satisfied the painter—as a pretext to discuss his working methods, specifically his use of hundreds of pastel sketches of the sea and sky. Baudelaire speaks as so many other later visitors to Boudin's studio would of the artist's extreme modesty in showing his work. Yet he marvels at how his studies "understand what would seem beyond comprehension." They are "so rapidly and so faithfully sketched from what is the most inconstant, incomprehensible of forces and colors, the waves and the clouds, always with the dates, hours and [the direction of] the wind noted in the margin." Later, Fitzgerald also noted Boudin's "habit of labeling [his pastels] like a meteorologist, with the hour, height of the sun, etc."; and Camille Corot, who spoke of him as the "king of the skies," claimed that he had created a "*veritable histoire du ciel*." Boudin remained concerned with the specifics of time and place throughout his career; indeed, even the late paintings of Villefranche and Deauville shown here (PLATES XXIII and XXVI) are not only identified by the artist's inscriptions but dated to the day. This obsession with meteorological specifics was shared by many other mid-nineteenth century artists. We recall that the young Thomas Eakins wrote in 1869 that in a truly successful painting "you can see what o'clock it is, whether morning or afternoon, if it is hot or cold, winter or summer." So captivated was Baudelaire by Boudin's sketches that he brought all of his poetry to bear on the effort to describe them: "In the end all those clouds with their fantastical formations and lighting effects, the chaotic shadows, those green and rose immensities suspended and superimposed on one another, the yawning furnaces, the firmaments of crumpled, curled or torn black and violet satin, the horizons in mourning or streaming with molten metal, all these depths, all these splendors arise in the brain like strong drink or the eloquence

of opium." The far-sighted Baudelaire predicted, "I have no doubt that in time he will capture the magic of air and water in finished works as well as sketches."

In the same year that Boudin first exhibited at the Salon he was also convinced by his artist friends, above all the young Monet, to move to Paris, where he found a studio on the boulevard Montmartre. Thus began a lifelong pattern of spending his winters in Paris and the warmer months in Normandy and Brittany. In 1860 he visited Honfleur, and for the first time, the fashionable resort of Trouville. When he returned to Paris that fall he began living with a young Breton woman, Marie-Anne Guédès, who became his wife in 1863. To make ends meet in these years, Boudin worked for the highly successful artist Troyon, squaring up the latter's sketches and even occasionally painting the skies in his pictures. However, he still entered into an agreement as late as 1861 to produce one dozen pictures for a mere 75F, rationalizing "I can't really grumble since I haven't yet produced anything worthwhile." In the summer of 1862 he also organized, together with a painter friend, A. Dubourg, a public sale of paintings in Caen, where disastrously, the two partners failed to sell a single picture. Boudin wrote, "I forgot to eat that day and the water of the Orne looked singularly tempting." While his financial successes were still limited, his circle of artist friends was constantly expanding. Boudin was well acquainted with Edouard Manet, met Charles Daubigny and Corot in 1861 and by the following year had made the acquaintance of Johan Barthold Jongkind (PLATES IV and V).

The Dutch painter Jongkind had been a pupil of Isabey and was also a friend of Monet. Five years older than Boudin, Jongkind, in the 1850s, had begun to develop a landscape painting style of exceptional breadth and freedom that probably inspired the younger artist to loosen his technique and attempt a more spontaneous application of his paint. Jongkind subsequently became an important precursor of Impressionism. Although alcoholic and psychologically unstable, he had an important liberating effect on many of his artistic colleagues. Boudin remained closely attached to Jongkind until the latter's death and even sought to have him elected in his stead to the Légion d'Honneur.

Boudin was already in his late thirties before he fashioned the style and settled upon the subjects that brought him critical recognition and secured his reputation. During the 1860s he developed a type of intimately scaled marine painting that eschewed the drama of earlier romantic seascapes, with their storms and shipwrecks and the open sea, to focus on calm visions of harbors and coastal views. Although his favored format was small, usually two-thirds or even three-quarters of the scene was given over to sky. His touch was rapid and fluid, but also delicate, never broken and detached as in later Impressionist paintings. The style of divided light and color that Monet and

Renoir created in 1869 was not Boudin's technique, which remained gently feathered, blended, and succinctly articulated. Yet, as the critic Philippe Burty already recognized in an essay on the artist written for *La République Française* in 1883, Boudin built on the achievements of earlier English landscapists, such as John Constable and Richard Parkes Bonington, as well as his immediate French predecessors (Isabey, Paul Huet, and Troyon but above all Corot) to fashion a style that more clearly anticipates the Impressionists' "rapid translation of sensations" than the work of any other artist with the exception of Jongkind. Writing in the Chase Gallery catalogue Fitzgerald too recognized Boudin's position: his landscapes are "full of most charming atmospheric effects. Without being 'impressionist' pictures, they breathe with some of the best qualities of that school." Boudin achieved his success, Fitzgerald concluded, because "he has been essentially an out-of-doors painter, studying and working incessantly from Nature." Since Boudin was virtually an autodidact he had few of the slick conventions of academically trained landscapists; as Burty succinctly put it, "*nulles traces d'école*" (not a trace of schooling). And when the thoughtful *Boston Post* reviewer quoted above used the baudelairian term "*naivete*" (Baudelaire: "genius is childhood recovered at will") to commend Boudin's marines, he undoubtedly was responding to these qualities of directness, immediacy, and an absence of any academic finish or stylishness. Boudin's slow, hard-won maturation as an artist apparently resulted from his uncommon combination of obstinacy and intelligence. His observations of the sea and sky were new, but had been earned through a methodical vigilance and great patience. Thus, the critic Edmond Duranty could write in the *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* in 1877 that what Boudin offered his viewers was nothing less than "*la mer moderne*" (the modern sea).

Modernity was, of course, a special obsession of French nineteenth-century artists. Daumier had insisted, "*Il faut être de son temps*" (It is necessary to be of one's own time), and Baudelaire extolled the heroism and beauty of contemporaneity in his famous essay "*Peintre de la vie moderne*" (published in 1863 but probably written as early as 1859). While Boudin was scarcely Constantin Guys—that rather wan recorder of dandies and *flâneurs* championed by Baudelaire in his essay—he too responded to the latter's call for a "sketch of manners, the depiction of bourgeois life, and the pageantry of fashion." Reportedly at the encouragement of Isabey, Boudin began painting the elegant summer visitors on the beach at Trouville and Deauville (PLATES VII and X). He depicted there figures seated or strolling on the sand always elaborately dressed in crinoline of "*la dernière mode*," carefully coiffed and carrying parasols and attended by picturesque children and dogs. According to Gustave Geffroy, who reviewed the posthumous exhibition of Boudin's art in 1899 for *La Vie Artistique*, these *scènes de plage* were initially rejected by dealers, who regarded them as *peintures dans le gout*

des gravures de modes (paintings in the taste of fashion engravings). However, together with his images of regattas and horse races they soon proved to be very popular, and contributed to Boudin's first financial and critical success. In 1864, 1865, and 1866, all of his Salon submissions were *plage* scenes at Trouville except one concert at the casino in Deauville. He spent the summer of 1863 in Trouville with Courbet and the latter's famous pupil, the American James Abbott McNeill Whistler. However, almost from the beginning he felt ambivalent about his beach paintings. Returning in August 1867 from a visit in Brittany to the working villages of Le Faou, Landernau, and Plougastel, he wrote, "The beach at Trouville that I once so loved seemed on my return no

Trouville,
the
promenade
and
the beach,
1860



more than a hideous masquerade. One would almost need to be a genius to make anything out of the crowd of affected idlers. After spending a month with the peasants inured to backbreaking labor in the fields, black bread, and water, the sight of the hordes of gilded parasites with their triumphant airs seems somehow pitiful, and one feels almost ashamed at painting the idle rich." However, when Boudin mounted a successful auction of his own work in Paris in 1868, he was quick to note that the prices of his beach scenes had escalated much more than those of his seascapes, and he never fully abandoned *plage* subjects.

One sign of Boudin's growing success was a commission in 1869 from the consul of Baden-Württemberg in Le Havre, G. Rosenlecker, for

decorative panels for his chateau at Bourdainville in Normandy. Boudin also moved into a larger studio in Paris at 32 rue Saint-Lazare and began to travel more. That summer he visited many small harbors along the Normandy and Brittany coasts, including tiny Portrieux (PLATE IX). During the summer of 1870, he traveled from Cape Cameret in Finistère to Berck, which he later visited repeatedly (PLATE XV), Etaples, and Dunkirk. However, in December the Franco-Prussian War forced Boudin to seek refuge in Brussels, where he encountered his old friend, the still-life painter Antoine Vollon, as well as Virgile Diaz. He also lived and worked for a while in Antwerp, where he painted some of his most beautiful works. While in Belgium he had the first symptoms of facial neuralgia that would trouble him increasingly in later life. Although he initially resented his Flemish surroundings, Boudin subsequently added Antwerp to his usual summer tour of the Normandy coast, returning there every year until 1876.

Back in Paris the Commune was expelled and Boudin's old friend Courbet was arrested, imprisoned, and fined for his purported involvement in the toppling of the Vendôme Column. Little or nothing of the tumultuous politics of the day found their way into Boudin's serene art; he was content to paint ships and harbors (PLATES VIII, XI, and XII), which outnumber the beach scenes in these years. In 1873 Boudin also visited two major ports, Rotterdam and Bordeaux. Although he often complained in his letters of the unattractiveness of many of the big working harbors that he visited, he was repeatedly drawn back to these subjects, and no large port fascinated him more than Le Havre (PLATES VIII, XVIII, XIX, and XXI).

The critic Jules Castagnary, who was the champion of the Realists, could write in his 1873 Salon review, "as for Monsieur Boudin, there is nothing to say, his reputation is established," and three years later he began a lobbying campaign to have the artist awarded a medal. Nonetheless, Boudin received no official honors until the end of his life. In 1874 he participated in the first exhibition of the diverse group of artists who showed their work under the banner of the *société anonyme*, later called the Impressionists, at Nadar's studio on the boulevard des Capucines. Two of Boudin's three entries were of Portrieux (PLATE IX). This exhibition was the only one of the eight that the group mounted in which Boudin participated, and as has already been noted, while his style anticipated theirs, it differed fundamentally from that of the orthodox proponents of Impressionism. These were hard years for the pictorial arts. The French economy was in a slump and the art market in retreat. Many of Boudin's old colleagues died: Millet and Corot (who Boudin eulogized as "the two most strongly individual artists of our time") in 1875, Narcisse Diaz in 1876, Courbet in 1877 (after four years of exile in Switzerland), Charles-François Daubigny in 1878, and Couture in 1879. Nonetheless, Boudin continued to be highly productive and traveled

extensively, journeying on in 1875, 1876, 1879, and 1880 from Normandy and Berck to visit Jongkind's Holland, where he stayed in Rotterdam, Dordrecht, and Scheveningen on the coast near The Hague. Boudin held two public sales of his art in Paris and Le Havre in 1879 with mostly discouraging results, but his luck was about to change.

On February 5, 1881, Boudin received a visit from the famous dealer Paul Durand-Ruel, who was the promoter of many *avant-garde* painters, including Monet, Sisley, and Pissarro, and who had organized the Impressionists' second exhibition in his Paris gallery. Durand-Ruel bought the entire contents of Boudin's studio and became his dealer, thus bringing the artist a new financial security. In the same year the painter won a third-class medal at the Salon, and in 1883 Durand-Ruel organized an exhibition of his work in his new gallery on the boulevard de la Madeleine. A sure sign of Boudin's new success were the imitations (PLATE XIV) and forgeries of his art that began to appear. In subsequent years (1889, 1890, 1891) Durand-Ruel organized four additional shows of the artist's work, including the Boston exhibition in 1890. Most of the critics, but notably Burty, Fourcaud, and Geffroy, were very positive in their response to the large exhibition in 1883; both Fourcaud and Geffroy praised the "sincerity" of Boudin's landscapes—an emotion prized above virtually all others in the nineteenth century. While handling the lion's share of Boudin's work, Durand-Ruel never seems to have held exclusive rights to the painter's art. According to Geffroy's article of 1899, when Boudin was counseled to work for only one dealer who would monopolize his art and thus raise his prices, he answered, "I painted too long without being able to sell anything. Today when a collector knocks on my door, I'm too flattered by his approach not to give him satisfaction. . . . I'm glad to please those who trouble themselves for me." And the critic further claimed that to those who suggested that Boudin—the author of nearly four thousand (!) paintings—was too productive for his own financial good, he answered, "I could certainly restrain myself and limit the number of my paintings to sell them more expensively, but what would I do in the intervals? I would be bored. Painting is my only pleasure." Boudin truly painted as easily as he breathed, but having watched old Troyon work himself to madness and finally death, he observed, "One must take time off to live. . . . productivity . . . should never degenerate into rapacity."

With his new income Boudin built a house in 1884 at Trouville, which he called *La villa des Ajoncs* (Gorse Villa) and the following year made his first trip to the Midi. He would return to the Mediterranean many times thereafter and up through the year of his death. Boudin's favored sites for painting were in Antibes, Beaulieu, Nice, Juan-les-Pins, and especially the rather brutally handsome harbor of Villefranche (PLATE XXIII). In 1883 Boudin had won a silver medal at the Salon, and in 1886 and 1888 paintings

that he exhibited in the Salon were purchased by the state. His works were also included in Durand-Ruel's exhibition held in New York in 1886 at the National Academy of Design entitled "The Impressionists of Paris," but once again the 312 submissions were a heterogeneous lot, scarcely the representatives of a single artistic movement. Boudin could write of his own style in 1888, "Contrary to others, I do all in my power to conserve the appearance of a sketch in my painting. And already I am accused of overelaboration,"—it was an apparent acknowledgement that his works often have the spontaneity of Impressionist paintings but are more fully articulated.

In 1889 Boudin lost his adored wife and was deeply grieved. After a respectful period, a friend hoping to console him suggested that he take a "female companion, [preferably one] about 50 years old." Still in possession of his sense of humor, Boudin thankfully declined the advice, saying he imagined his friend's candidate to be "a lady of rigid morals, carrying a little dog under her arm, and reading Legouv  s *The Merit of Women*, just like one I once knew at Saint-Sim  on who unceremoniously burnt my Diderot." While Boudin's works were on view in Boston in 1890, he again took the opportunity to travel in Normandy, revisiting Etaples, F  camp, and Berck and devoting a group of paintings in 1890 and 1891 to the gracefully arching river Somme at Saint Val  ry (PLATE XXII). The following winter he was again on the Mediterranean coast and concentrated his efforts at Villefranche (PLATE XXIII); these subjects monopolized his submissions to the Salon that year and brought him his third purchase by the state. In his later years, Boudin often adopted a very broad and sketchy technique that undoubtedly owes something to his younger Impressionist colleagues. In, for example, his painting of 189[3] of a squall on the beach at low tide in Trouville (PLATE XXIV), he uses a painterly shorthand of the greatest economy and speed. The staffage are reduced to a few daubs of paint, the rain indicated by hasty slashing strokes wet into wet, and the panorama unified atmospherically by an overall grey tonality. However, Boudin's *Spatstil* scarcely provides a textbook example of the painterly and summary technique often associated with an aging artist. Beside such works as *Trouville, Low Tide*, he produced other paintings of great delicacy and control (for example, PLATES XXV and XXVI). Boudin continued to paint a few *sc  nes de plage* with larger scale figures, as well as his beloved washerwomen (PLATE XVI) and the market scenes, churches, and pastoral views with cows that are not represented in this show, but the human presence was often reduced in his later work as he concentrated increasingly on the grandeur of the landscape, sky, and weather.

After his usual stay on the C  te d'Azur in 1892 he traveled on for the first time to Italy and Venice. He would return again to the city of light and color in 1894 and 1895, but perhaps surprisingly he seems to have dated only one painting of Venice on his first visit (see Schmit no. 2908).

Although his letters express his awe and admiration for his exotic new surroundings, it was typical of Boudin that it took him a season or two to acclimate himself artistically to a new setting; only in 1895 would he devote two concentrated months of work to recording his observations of the city. Boudin often expressed fears in these last years that his artistic powers were failing, although there is nothing to support these anxieties in the scores of paintings he produced of Venice. He finally exhibited some sketches from this series at the Salon, but only in 1897, the last year of his contributions. These images were often executed in the putty-colored, overcast tones that he favored even for his paintings of Villefranche and the Midi; he wrote home in 1895 that "Venice, like all luminous landscapes, is grey in color, and its atmosphere is gentle and misty." But in other works he fully acknowledged the brilliant blue sky of the Adriatic and the pellucid clarity of Mediterranean light (for example, PLATE XXV).

Boudin returned to Deauville in 1896, sent nothing to the Salon that year, and saw his health deteriorate. He continued to paint the town's marshes and broad strand until the very end of his life (PLATE XXVI) and even tried his hand again at lithography, a medium in which he had taken only a passing interest. Suffering from cancer of the stomach, he could scarcely eat, but he remained throughout the winter in his studio in Paris on the Place Vintimille. At his doctor's bidding, he traveled one last time to Beaulieu to convalesce only to return to Deauville to die that summer on August 8, 1898. The obsequies took place at the Church of La Trinité in Paris, and he was buried in Saint-Valéry cemetery in Montmartre beside his wife.

Almost immediately following Boudin's death, exhibitions were organized to honor the painter, including a show at Durand-Ruel's gallery in New York in December 1898 of about fifty works. A massive retrospective of more than 450 works (easily the largest show ever mounted of Boudin's art) was put on display in 1899 at the Ecole des Beaux Arts, Paris, through the instigation of Boudin's executor, the collector George Cahen, who wrote a book on the artist in 1900. Artistic eulogies were also offered by Geffroy (*La Vie Artistique*, 1899), Arsène Alexandre (the preface to the catalogue of the sale of the contents of Boudin's studio at the Hotel Drouot, Paris, March 20, 1899), and M. Albert Sorel, at the inauguration on August 13, 1899, of the Musée Saint-Etienne in Honfleur, a museum of Norman ethnography and art in which a gallery was reserved for Boudin's work.

Boudin is now recognized as the most original French marine painter of the last century, achieving a mastery of his specialty equal to that of his English predecessors Constable, Bonington, and Turner, and to the accomplishments of France's own Barbizon landscapists. Through his unprecedented pictorial responsiveness to the elusive magic of sea and sky, he became a chief progenitor of Impressionist landscape painting and greatly

benefitted subsequent generations of marine painters. No doubt he even caught the eye of some of those Massachusetts painters who were shooed to Chase's Gallery by the *Boston Post* in 1890 before departing for a summer of sketching on Cape Ann. Today there is scarcely a major collection of nineteenth-century French paintings that omits the art of this self-effacing, circumspect but always beguiling *intimist*.



THE PLATES

HARBOR VIEW, c.1850

PROVENANCE: Acquired from Louis Richardson, 1904, in exchange for a Daubigny and a Thaulow.

EXHIBITIONS: Hartford, CT, Wadsworth Atheneum, *The Romantic Circle*, 1952; Cambridge, MA, Busch-Reisinger Museum, *Rivers and Seas: Their Reflection in Landscape, 18th–20th Century*, 1962; Cambridge, MA, Fogg Art Museum, *Eugène Isabey*, 1967, no. 14, ill.; Kyoto, Municipal Museum of Art, May 30–July 2, 1989, Sapporo, Hokkaido Museum of Modern Art, July 15–August 20, 1989, and Yokohama, Sogo Museum of Art, August 30–October 10, 1989, *From Neo-Classicism to Impressionism: French Art from the Boston Museum of Fine Arts* (catalogue by Lucy MacClintock), no. 13, ill.; Boston, Museum of Fine Arts, "Boudin in Boston," 1990.

LITERATURE: MFA, Boston, *Summary Catalogue* (1985), p. 136, ill.

Through his partnership in a stationery shop in Le Havre specializing in framing paintings, Boudin met some of the leading artists of his day, including Eugène Isabey, Constant Troyon, Thomas Couture, and Jean-François Millet. The first two Boudin regarded as his teachers, and he later credited Millet with having corrected his first drawings.

Isabey's harbor views naturally appealed to Boudin and, together with seventeenth-century Dutch paintings (the marines of Willem van de Velde and Ludolf Backhuysen as well as Jacob van Ruisdael's landscapes), asserted some of the earliest influences on his art. In this case the site is probably Fécamps with its prominent church rising over the tidal inlet. The barrel-hulled fishing fleet rests aground with lading and maintenance activities filling the hours between tides. A friend of Eugène Delacroix, Paul Huet, Richard Parkes Bonington, and other leading Romantic painters of the immediately preceding generation, Isabey developed an unfinished style with a *cuisinée* facture that partly anticipates the painterly manner of Johan Barthold Jongkind and Boudin but retains a greater concern with structure and form.



LOUIS GABRIEL EUGENE ISABEY, French, 1803–86

Harbor View, c. 1850

Signed lower right: E. Isabey

Oil on canvas, 13 $\frac{3}{8}$ x 18 $\frac{7}{8}$ in. (33.3 x 47.9 cm.)

Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; The Henry C. and
Martha B. Angell Collection, 19.101

ON THE CLIFF (SUR LA FALAISE), LATE 1850s

A man (possibly an artist) dressed in brown reclines on the green edge of a sea cliff. To the left a woman in a white cap, red jacket, and blue skirt leads a child in blue along a pathway. Cottages appear in the distance, and in the lower right is the ocean. The sky overhead is grey and filled with clouds. Mist rises from the sea below.

Early in his career, Boudin was influenced by Constant Troyon, a member of the Barbizon school who was fourteen years his senior. The two artists met in Le Havre in the 1840s, and Boudin was immediately drawn to Troyon's pastoral landscapes and evocative coastal views. Not only would Boudin display the older artist's works in his stationery shop, but he also claimed to have made his first experiments in landscape painting under Troyon's guidance. When Boudin subsequently moved to Paris in the winter of 1861, he worked for Troyon, who engaged him to square up the compositions for his many commissions and even occasionally asked him to paint the skies in his landscapes. At Troyon's death in 1865, Boudin was crushed, not merely because he had lost a former employer but because he had also lost a mentor.

PROVENANCE: Sale Troyon, Paris (exp. Francis Petit), January 22–February 1, 1866 (the seal of the "Vente Troyon" in red, lower left); Boussod Valadon & Cie, Paris; Mr. Henry Lee Higginson, bequeathed to the museum in 1935.

EXHIBITIONS: Boston, Museum of Fine Arts, "Boudin in Boston", 1990.

LITERATURE: MFA, Boston, *Summary Catalogue* (1985), p. 283, ill.



CONSTANT TROYON, French, 1810–65

On the Cliff (Sur la Falaise), late 1850s

Unsigned

Oil on paperboard, 10 $\frac{1}{8}$ x 15 $\frac{3}{8}$ in. (25.7 x 39.2 cm.)

Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; bequest of Henry Lee
Higginson, 35.1179

RIVER LANDSCAPE WITH HOUSES AND BRIDGE, LATER 1850s

EXHIBITIONS: Boston, Museum of Fine Arts, "Boudin in Boston," 1990.

This splendid large drawing of a river with tree-lined banks attests to Boudin's abiding admiration for Barbizon school landscapists such as Charles François Daubigny. During the first decade of his career Boudin made many studies of the countryside, especially around his native Honfleur, with its pastoral fields, streams, and great trees. Although this work is not dated, it may be one of the early studies from the late 1850s. Boudin's pastels from this period were liberally praised by Charles Baudelaire in his review of the Salon of 1859 (see Introduction). Although chiefly known as a marine artist, Boudin also drew and painted pastoral and river landscapes throughout his career.



LOUIS EUGENE BOUDIN

River Landscape with Houses and Bridge, later 1850s

Initialed lower right in violet pen and ink: E B

Graphite on rough, off-white paper, 11½ x 17½ in. (28.3 x 44.5 cm.)

Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; M. and M. Karolik Fund, 1972.368

HARBOR SCENE IN HOLLAND (DORDRECHT?), 1868

PROVENANCE: Count Cecil Pecci-Blunt

EXHIBITIONS: Phoenix, AZ, Phoenix Art Museum, *Corot to Braque: French Paintings from the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston*, September 19–November 22, 1980 (not in catalogue); Boston, Museum of Fine Arts, "Boudin in Boston," 1990.

LITERATURE: Victorine Hefting, *Jongkind: Sa vie, son oeuvre, son époque* (Paris, 1975), p. 198, no. 448, ill.; MFA, Boston, *Summary Catalogue* (1985), p. 153.

In the center a large black brigantine with elaborate rigging and sails partly furled is anchored in a canal. On the right are brick houses and tall trees, to the left, a second, smaller brigantine and a rowboat. In the background rise the silhouette of a drawbridge and the spectre of a tall windmill. The twilight sky is very loosely painted in a profusion of blue, purple, and white clouds.

Previously described as a scene in Rotterdam, the site cannot be specified, but it may be Dordrecht. Jongkind visited both Rotterdam and Dordrecht in the fall of 1868; however, a painting dated 1870 depicting virtually the same scene and probably based on the present picture was identified by Hefting as *Boats in Dordrecht* (no. 529). Still another painting dated 1872 (Hefting no. 579) may also be inspired by the present painting.

The Dutch painter Jongkind was credited by no less seasoned observers than Edouard Manet and Camille Pissarro with being the progenitor of Impressionist landscape painting. His broad and sketchy style had an unprecedented immediacy, which avant-garde critic Thoré-Bürger noted, "does not appeal to everyone, but delights all who love spontaneous painting, in which strong feelings are rendered with originality." The critic continued, "I have always maintained that true painters work at speed, under the influence of impressions."

Boudin first met Jongkind at the small French resort of Trouville in 1862. The two friends worked in Isabey's studio and at the farm Saint-Siméon near Honfleur, which overlooks the Seine and Le Havre and which had become a congregating place for artists. Jongkind had an emancipating effect on Boudin, inspiring him not only to broaden and loosen his touch but also to overcome his self-effacing diffidence. A late bloomer, Boudin apparently needed Jongkind's confident example to find his own voice.



JOHAN BARTHOLD JONGKIND, Dutch, 1819–91

Harbor Scene in Holland (Dordrecht?), 1868

Signed and dated lower left: Jongkind 1868

Oil on canvas, 16½ x 22 in. (42 x 56 cm.)

Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; Gift of Count Cecil
Pecci-Blunt, 61.1242

HARBOR BY MOONLIGHT, 1871

PROVENANCE: Possibly with Bernheim Jeune, Paris; Diot, Paris; Henry C. Angell, Boston, 1888.

EXHIBITIONS: Boston, Copley Society, *Hundred Masterpieces*, 1897, no. 45 (lent by Angell); Miami, Miami Art Center, *The Artist and the Sea*, March 20–April 18, 1969, p. 6, no. 19; Boston, Museum of Fine Arts, "Boudin in Boston," 1990.

LITERATURE: (not in Hefting); MFA, Boston, *Summary Catalogue* (1985), p. 153.

A square-rigger is moored in a tree-lined canal below a windmill on the right bank. In the lower left a man propels a boat. The moon is obscured by clouds but brightly illuminates the night sky, sending shimmering reflections over the water. The blue-grey of the sky is mottled with yellow and silver light, while the trees are touched with brown and purple.

Jongkind first dated paintings in 1839 and was painting night scenes by 1853 (see Hefting nos. 121 and 122). These became increasingly broader in execution through the mid-1850s, and by 1858 (see Hefting, no. 184) he was executing nocturnes with all the elements—the tall ship, rowboat, silhouetted mill, and moonlight—found in this painting. Jongkind executed a few other nocturnes in 1871 (see, for example, Hefting no. 553). Like this work, they recall Dutch scenery but are probably imaginary or painted from memory. Although he did not visit his homeland in 1871, he painted several identifiable scenes of Dutch towns.

In the 1870s, Boudin and Monet both visited the Netherlands, not only to study the accomplishments of seventeenth-century Dutch painters from Holland's Golden Age (who included the famous painter of night scenes, Aert van der Neer), but also undoubtedly to appreciate at first hand the moist and watery landscape made familiar to them by Jongkind's art. Although he was not so devoted to the subject as Jongkind, Boudin also painted a significant number of nocturnes.



JOHAN BARTHOLD JONGKIND, Dutch, 1819–91

Harbor by Moonlight, 1871

Signed and dated lower right: Jongkind 1871

Oil on canvas, 13 $\frac{1}{8}$ x 18 $\frac{1}{8}$ in. (34 x 46.2 cm.)

Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; The Henry C. and Martha
B. Angell Collection, 19.95

QUAY AT HONFLEUR, 1865

Here, what appears to be a brig, a hermaphrodite brig, and a smaller coasting vessel are docked on the quay at Honfleur. A single figure in red appears on the right.

PROVENANCE: Rowland Burdon-Muller.

EXHIBITIONS: Boston, Museum of Fine Arts, "Boudin in Boston," 1990.

LITERATURE: Schmit 1973, vol. 1, no. 339; MFA, Boston, *Summary Catalogue* (1985), p. 30, ill.

This small study was executed relatively early in Boudin's career when he was still developing his own personal marine painting style. It may be compared to another even earlier view of the same site but with different boats that has been dated by Schmit to about 1858 to 1862 (Schmit 1973, vol. 1, no. 197). That work has a thicker execution, more pronounced contrasts of light and shade, and a less atmospheric appearance.

Throughout his life, Boudin repeatedly spent summers in his native Honfleur, a modest-sized port (about 9,000 inhabitants) that was much smaller than nearby Le Havre and suffering from both the latter's competition and the silting up of its harbor. Situated picturesquely at the mouth of the Seine on the Normandy coast, Honfleur was an ideal setting for seascapes and harbor views. Paul Huet, Isabey, and Camille Corot painted marines at Honfleur before Boudin did, and Jongkind and Monet later worked at his side there. Typically Boudin's paintings of Honfleur depict the harbor, quay, and coastline, never the open ocean.

Honfleur was also the site of the farm at Saint-Siméon, a favorite meeting place for landscape artists of the generation following the Barbizon painters. Boudin spent his first summer at the farm in 1854 and returned in 1859 with his new friend Gustave Courbet. The "Ecole Saint-Siméon" also included François Français, Adophe-Félix Cals, Louis-Alexandre Dubourg, Jongkind, and Narcisse Diaz de la Peña. The short-lived painter Frédéric Bazille wrote to his parents from Honfleur that "*le pays est le paradis*" (the countryside is paradise).



LOUIS EUGENE BOUDIN

Quay at Honfleur, 1865

Signed and dated lower right: E. Boudin 65; inscribed
lower left: Honfleur

Oil on paper mounted on panel, 8 x 10½ in.
(20.3 x 26.8 cm.)

Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; anonymous gift, 1971.425

FASHIONABLE FIGURES ON THE BEACH, 1865

PROVENANCE: Cadart & Luquet, Paris; Galerie Georges Petit, Paris; Dr. Francisco Llobet, Buenos Aires, 1930s; acquired from Fritz and Peter Nathan, Zürich, in 1962 by Mr. and Mrs. John Wilson, Boston.

EXHIBITIONS: New York, Hirschl & Adler Galleries, *Eugène Boudin, 1824–1898*, 1966, no. 7, ill. on the cover of the catalogue; Boston, Museum of Fine Arts, "Boudin in Boston," 1990.

LITERATURE: Schmit 1973, vol. 1, no. 345, ill.; MFA, Boston, *Summary Catalogue* (1985), p. 30.

A large group of fashionably dressed ladies, gentlemen, and children are arranged at their leisure, seated and standing, along the beach. Some of the men wear straw hats, and the ladies hold parasols to shelter themselves from the sun that casts long shadows over the sand. In the back are bathers' cabanas, and at the left some waders have ventured into the water. In the foreground are two dogs.

In 1860 Boudin first spent the summer in the increasingly fashionable seaside resort of Trouville. There, at the suggestion of Isabey, he painted not only landscapes and marines but also images of *moeurs* (social manners)—usually scenes of elegant ladies in crinolines and gentlemen with boaters and walking sticks taking the air on the beach. Capturing all the splendor and studied insouciance of the Second Empire, these *plage* scenes proved to be very popular. Boudin painted such subjects repeatedly, but first took up the theme in 1860 (see Schmit 1973, vol. 1, no. 254, dated 1860, Minneapolis Institute of Art), perfecting it in the middle years of the decade. This painting in the collection of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, is close in composition to another *plage* scene, also dated 1865, in the collection of Paul Mellon, Upperville, Virginia (Schmit 1973, vol. 1, no. 346). It may also be compared to several other works from this year that depict elegant companies arranged horizontally across the scene, mostly obscuring the water, and viewed in full daylight or at sunset (see Schmit 1973, vol. 1, nos. 342–4).

Despite the fact that the *plage* paintings were a boon to Boudin's career, almost from the start he felt ambivalent about them. Already in 1863, he wrote, "Some claim that [these images] are a vein of gold to be exploited." He nonetheless never abandoned the theme, dating examples as late as 1896 (see Schmit 1973, vol. 3, no. 3553).



LOUIS EUGENE BOUDIN

Fashionable Figures on the Beach, 1865

Signed and dated lower right: E. Boudin-65

Oil on panel, 14 x 22 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. (35.5 x 57.5 cm.)

Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; gift of Mr. and Mrs. John

J. Wilson, 1974.565

THE OUTER PORT, LE HAVRE, c.1868–72

PROVENANCE: Alexander Dumas Fils, Paris; Vose Galleries, Boston; Mr. and Mrs. M.A. Ryerson, Chicago; Mrs. Arthur Meeker, Chicago; The Art Institute of Chicago.

EXHIBITIONS: Chicago, University of Chicago, June 1916; Minneapolis, Minneapolis Institute of Arts, October–December 1921; Chicago, The Art Institute of Chicago, *Loan Exhibition of Paintings by Eugène Boudin*, 1935–6, no. 17; Boston, Museum of Fine Arts, 1970s.

LITERATURE: *The Fine Arts Journal*, vol. 35 (1917), pp. 183–5; Benjamin 1937, p. 186, ill. p. 141; Schmit 1973, vol. 1, p. 168, no. 452, ill.

The busy harbor of Le Havre bustles with large sailing vessels as well as smaller rowboats ferrying people back and forth. In the left foreground is docked a large full-rigged French ship; a crowd of figures are gathered on the shore and in two small boats at its stern. On the right is a broadside view of a bark. Boudin apparently painted this scene from the tip of the Quai Lamandé with the Grand Quai and city of Le Havre on the right, the Bastion de la Floride on the left, and the mouth of the Seine viewed across the Outer Port in the distance. Overhead, fleecy clouds fill the sky.

Though born in Honfleur, Boudin grew up in Le Havre and painted its port at least as early as 1852–5 (see Schmit 1973, vol. 1, no. 267), and undated scenes appear repeatedly throughout the 1860s and 70s. Schmit dated this work and several other Havre scenes c. 1868–72 (see Schmit 1973, vol. 1, nos. 451–4).



LOUIS EUGENE BOUDIN

The Outer Port, Le Havre, c. 1868-72

Signed lower left: E. Boudin

Oil on canvas, 11¼ x 17¼ in. (30 x 45 cm.)

William A. Coolidge (on long-term loan to the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston)

PORTRIEUX, LOW TIDE, 1869

PROVENANCE: M. de Villars, Paris; Sale de Villars, Paris (Hotel Drouot), May 1, 1874, no. 4 (440F); sales, Paris (Hotel Drouot), November 25, 1898, no. 2; Aghion, Paris; Sale Aghion, Paris (Hotel Drouot), March 29, 1918 (2,400F to Durand-Ruel); sold by Galeries Durand-Ruel, Paris, to A. Tooth and Sons, London, on November 20, 1934; Sale New York (Christies), May 16, 1985, no. 309, (b.i.)

EXHIBITIONS: Cambridge, MA, Charles Hayden Memorial Library, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, *From Private Collections of M.I.T.*, 1967 (lent by Mr. and Mrs. John Wilson); Boston, on loan to the Museum of Fine Arts, 1968.

LITERATURE: Schmit 1973, vol. 1, no. 473, ill.

Five partially dismasted vessels lie aground at low tide in the little harbor of Portrieux on the Normandy coast. The village of Portrieux, near St. Brieuc and St. Quay, was known for its port of refuge as well as its good sea-bathing—a feature that Boudin depicted in several of his *plage* scenes.

Executed in 1869, this is Boudin's earliest dated painting of the harbor at Portrieux. He would return to the site in 1873 and complete nearly twenty more closely related images of the vessels, mostly beached or lying aground, under lighting conditions that ranged from daylight to twilight and even moonlight (see Schmit 1973, vol. 1, nos. 916–33). Clearly the effect of the slender masts and their web of rigging and tilting silhouettes pitched against the changing sky appealed to the artist. When, in 1874, Monet organized the first of the seven shows that served as the formative exhibitions of the famous movement called Impressionism (but which included a stylistically diverse group of artists), two of the three paintings Boudin submitted were of Portrieux. While Boudin never exhibited with the Impressionist group again, he returned to Portrieux repeatedly, visiting at least as late as 1879.



LOUIS EUGENE BOUDIN

Portrieux, Low Tide, 1869

Signed and dated lower right: E. Boudin 69

Oil on canvas, 15 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 25 $\frac{5}{8}$ in. (40 x 65 cm.)

Private collection

FASHIONABLE FIGURES AT THE BEACH, 1870

EXHIBITION: Paris, Galerie Schmit,
Exposition Eugène Boudin, 1824–1898,
May 5–26, 1965, no. 155.

Three elegantly dressed ladies in crinolines and holding parasols and two gentlemen in suits and short-brimmed hats sit on a beach in straight-backed chairs. Farther back and to the right is another seated couple and on the left are still more figures. In the right foreground rests a dog and at the left is an empty chair.

Boudin executed countless quick sketches in pencil and watercolor of fashionably dressed figures at the beach. These served as *aides de memoires* for his paintings (see PLATE VII) but, perhaps surprisingly, few can be identified as preparatory studies for Boudin's finished compositions. His watercolor style was a lively, rapid and wet technique laid down over pencil lines. He perfected it in the 1860s, and the manner changed little thereafter. It was ideally suited to his work *en plein air*, since, as he wrote, "Anything painted from nature and on the spot always has a force, a power, and a vivacity of touch one cannot find in the studio." The Louvre alone owns more than 6,000 watercolors, pastels, and drawings by the prolific Boudin.



LOUIS EUGENE BOUDIN

Fashionable Figures at the Beach, 1870

Signed lower left: E. Boudin; dated lower right: 70

Pencil and watercolor on paper, 6 x 11½ in.

(15.2 x 28.2 cm.)

Private collection

HARBOR AT TROUVILLE, 1872

PROVENANCE: Georges Ibos, Paris; Sale Ibos, Paris (Hotel Drouot) June 19, 1890, no. 8 (to Galeries Durand-Ruel, Paris, for 2,400 F); O'Brien, Chicago; sale New York (Parke-Bernet), March 2, 1944, no. 39 (\$1,000); Vose Galleries, Boston; Mr. and Mrs. M.A. Ryerson, Chicago; Wildenstein & Co., New York.

EXHIBITION: Chicago, The Art Institute of Chicago, *Loan Exhibition of Paintings by Eugène Boudin, 1935–6*, no. 19.

LITERATURE: Benjamin 1937, p. 186, ill. p. 126; Schmit 1973, vol. 1, p. 277, no. 775, ill.

The immediate foreground of the scene is filled with the dark forms of small boats and, on the right, a larger barge. In the centermost boat, which is tied to the stern of the barge, sits a man. More figures appear in small boats out in the harbor, and on the horizon rise the masts and rigging of tall ships, one of which flies the tricolor. In the distance is the far shore and overhead, an overcast sky.

Boudin executed several paintings of the port in Trouville in 1872, including one (Schmit 1973, vol. 1, no. 774) that is observed from a point farther to the right of the viewpoint in this scene and that shows more of the wharf and the full expanse of the large building here just visible on the left. These near views of the darkened shapes of boats filling the foreground depart from Boudin's more customary designs, which usually keep the foreground open. The subject of the port at Trouville also is far rarer in Boudin's oeuvre than his many depictions of the town's jetties (see PLATE XVII) and beaches.



LOUIS EUGENE BOUDIN

Harbor at Trouville, 1872

Signed and dated lower right: E. Boudin 72
Oil on canvas, 12 $\frac{7}{8}$ x 18 $\frac{1}{4}$ in. (32.7 x 46.3 cm.)
Private collection

PORT, BRITTANY, 1873

PROVENANCE: Allard and Noël, Paris; reportedly acquired at auction by Henry C. Angell of Boston in 1876; gift of Martha B. Angell to the museum in 1919.

EXHIBITIONS: Boston, Museum of Fine Arts, *French Painting*, 1906; Boston, Museum of Fine Arts, *Evans Wing Opening*, 1915; Northampton, MA, Smith College, Hillyer Art Gallery, 1926; Norfolk Museum of Arts and Sciences, *French Impressionists*, 1941, no. 1; New London, CT, Connecticut College, 1941; Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center, 1941; Boston, Museum of Fine Arts, *Corot to Utrillo*, 1949, p. 31, ill.; Boston, Museum of Fine Arts, "Boudin in Boston," 1990.

LITERATURE: Schmit 1973, vol. 1, p. 307, no. 868, ill., MFA, Boston, *Summary Catalogue* (1985), p. 28, ill.

The site of the harbor in this painting has not been identified, but it may have been at Camaret in Finistère, at the tip of Brittany, where Boudin was active in 1873, the date on the painting. On the left a ship under full sail passes the harbor entrance; the other four boats are probably local fishing or coasting vessels. Writing in his journal in 1854, Boudin observed morosely, "Grey painting is scarcely to the present taste, above all for marines. . . . No one wants them at any price." However, by the time that this work was executed Boudin had lightened his palette and secured a clientele who appreciated the subtlety of his velvety grey images of overcast harbors. Recently cleaned, this painting now shows to special advantage all of the nuances of Boudin's understated style.



LOUIS EUGENE BOUDIN

Port, Brittany, 1873

Signed and dated lower left: E. Boudin/73

Oil on canvas, 14 $\frac{3}{8}$ x 23 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. (37.2 x 59.6 cm.)

Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; The Henry C. and Martha
B. Angell Collection, 19.98

SHIPS IN A HARBOR

PROVENANCE: Probably purchased from the artist by Galeries Durand-Ruel, Paris, in 1880; Erwin Davis, New York, from whom Durand-Ruel purchased it again on March 16, 1893, and sold it to Denman W. Ross of Cambridge, MA, on May 28, 1897; Ross presented it to the museum in 1906.

EXHIBITIONS: New York, Galeries Durand-Ruel, 1895, no. 41; Boston, Saint Botolph Club, *Monet*, 1899, no. 25; Boston, Copley Hall, *Monet*, 1905, no. 35; Boston, Museum of Fine Arts, *Monet*, 1914, no. 43; Boston, Museum of Fine Arts, *Monet*, 1927, no. 8; Boston, Museum of Fine Arts, *Impressionism: French and American*, June 15–October 14, 1973, no. 29; Boston, Museum of Fine Arts, *Monet Unveiled: A New Look at Boston's Paintings*, November 22, 1977–February 22, 1978, p. 16, no. 5, ill.; Boston, Museum of Fine Arts, "Boudin in Boston" 1990.

LITERATURE: *Museum of Fine Arts Bulletin* 1906, vol. 4, pp. 11, 35, ill.; "Kunstausstellungen," in *Kunst and Künstler*, 1912, p. 169, ill.; Charles Loring Borgmeyer, *The Master Impressionists* (Chicago, 1913), p. 21; Marthe de Fels, *La Vie de Cl. Monet* (Paris, 1929), p. 236; O. Reuterswärd, *Monet* (Stockholm, 1948), p. 281; Daniel Wildenstein, *Claude Monet. Biographie et catalogue raisonné....* vol. 1, 1840–1881 (Paris, 1974), no. 258, ill.

An unladen full-rigged ship is docked to port of a smaller three-master and a brig in an unidentified harbor, their furled sails, masts, and rigging indicated with hasty abbreviated strokes. The vessels' dark forms send great ripples and wiggling reflections out over the water. Overhead, the sky is heavily overcast. Despite the weather the palette is scarcely grey but a subtle admixture of blue, brown, green, purple, and muted shades of pink.

Monet became Boudin's pupil in Le Havre in 1858. Boudin is credited with having been the first to encourage the young artist to paint landscapes in the open air. Monet later reported that after watching Boudin paint for the first time, "Suddenly it was as if a veil had been torn from my eyes. I understood what painting could be. Boudin's absorption in his work, and his independence, were enough to decide the entire future and development of my painting."

Monet executed marines as well as landscapes, figure paintings, and still lifes during the first decade of his career. A group of seascapes that Monet painted at Honfleur in 1865 were successfully exhibited at the Salon, while his images of boats resting aground in Fécamp harbor painted in 1868 attest to his admiration for the marine painting tradition of Isabey and Troyon (see Wildenstein nos. 117–19) as well as of Boudin. This painting was probably executed several years later in Le Havre in 1873 (see also Wildenstein no. 260, which also was probably executed at this time). Boudin's legacy may still be detected in the theme of shipping and the painterly evocation of the overcast weather and the subtle treatment of light. However, Monet has fully accommodated and absorbed these influences, recasting his teacher's intimate style to a far more expansive and liberated conception of marine painting.



OSCAR CLAUDE MONET, French (1840–1926)

Ships in a Harbor, 1873

Signed lower right: Claude Monet

Oil on canvas, 19 $\frac{5}{8}$ x 24 in. (50 x 61 cm.)

Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; Denman Ross Collection,
06.117

PORT SCENE, C. 1880

PROVENANCE: According to John Spaulding, from the heirs of M. Cahen, who was Boudin's executor.

EXHIBITIONS: Boston, Museum of Fine Arts, "Boudin in Boston," 1990.

LITERATURE: MFA, Boston, *Summary Catalogue* (1985), p. 29, ill. (as by Boudin).

This diminutive painting of an unidentified port scene on an overcast day closely approximates the style of Boudin, who was often called an "intimist," but its brushwork and palette of beige and tan differ from those of the master. Schmit omitted the painting from his *catalogue raisonné* (1973) and privately reported (April 1963) that he felt it was the work of one of Boudin's contemporaries, its signature a forgery.



Follower of LOUIS EUGENE BOUDIN

Port Scene, c. 1880

Signed lower left: E. Boudin

Oil on panel, 6 $\frac{1}{8}$ x 8 $\frac{3}{8}$ in. (15.5 x 21.2 cm.)

Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; bequest of John T.

Spaulding, 48.521

THE INLET AT BERCK, 1882

Boudin first painted scenes at Berck (Pas-de-Calais) in 1876. He later returned to this small (5,000 inhabitants) seaside community on the English Channel about 50 kilometers south of Boulogne in 1881, 1882, and 1890, depicting not only the *plage* and its summer inhabitants with their tents and parasols (see, for example, Schmit 1973, vol. 2, no. 1657, dated 1882), but also flat-bottomed fishing boats on the strand at low tide (Schmit, vol. 2, no. 1660, dated 1882) and the pure landscape of the inlet's wide sandy shores.

The date on this painting has sometimes been incorrectly deciphered as 1880 rather than 1882. A painting dated May 31, 1881 (Schmit 1973, no. 1509), employs virtually the same "single-wing" panoramic design as this work of the following year; two other images of the *rivage* at Berck dated 1882 reverse the composition (see Schmit 1973, vol. 2, no. 1659 and 1663). Bordered by simple houses, bristling with fence posts, and tufted with sea grass, this painting in the Boston Museum of Fine Arts well illustrates Boudin's masterful restraint and his appreciation of the spare and understated beauty of the Normandy coast. Boudin had been preceded in his depictions of Berck by Edouard Manet, who painted his wife and brother-in-law seated on the sand of the beach in 1873. During these years Berck was increasingly popular as a bathing and health resort.

PROVENANCE: Sold by Galeries Durand-Ruel, Paris, to the O'Doard collection on November 29, 1892 (for 400F); Galeries Durand-Ruel, Paris, sold to M. Tavernier, Paris, on March 8, 1900; Mrs. Stephen S. Fitzgerald, Weston, MA, who bequeathed it to the museum in 1964.

EXHIBITIONS: Paris, Ecole Nationale des Beaux-Arts, *Exposition des oeuvres d'Eugène Boudin*, 1899, no. 253; Miami, Miami Art Center, *The Artist and the Sea*, March 20–April 18, 1969, p. 4, no. 5; Kyoto, Municipal Museum of Art, May 30–July 2, 1989, Sapporo, Hokkaido Museum of Modern Art, July 15–August 20, 1989, and Yokohama, Sogo Museum of Art, August 30–October 10, 1989, *From Neo-Classicism to Impressionism: French Art from the Boston Museum of Fine Arts* (catalogue by Lucy MacClintock), no. 54, ill.; Boston, Museum of Fine Arts, "Boudin in Boston," 1990.

LITERATURE: Schmit 1973, vol. 2, p. 140, no. 1658, ill.; MFA, Boston, *Summary Catalogue* (1985), p. 29, ill.



LOUIS EUGENE BOUDIN

The Inlet at Berck, 1882

Signed and dated lower right: E. Boudin/16 Juillet 82

Oil on canvas, 21½ x 29½ in. (54.5 x 75.0 cm.)

Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; Bequest of Mrs. Stephen
S. Fitzgerald, 64.1905

WASHERWOMEN BESIDE THE BRIDGE OVER THE RIVER TOUQUES, 1883

One of Boudin's favorite subjects was washerwomen scrubbing laundry on the banks of a river; he executed over one hundred works on this theme. Here, ironically, the women work in front of the bridge that crosses the Touques River that flows between the fashionable resort towns of Deauville and Trouville. The washerwomen's timeless forms in blue, grey, and white labor under a grey sky, unobserved by the bridge traffic.

Boudin's earliest dated images of the laundresses on the Touques are dated 1878 (see Schmit 1973, vol. 1, nos. 1226–9) while the latest bear the date 1896 (see Schmit 1973, vol. 3, nos. 3589–93). He depicted the women at close quarters as well as from a distance and from an elevated point in a broad landscape both with and without the bridge. In an auction of Boudin's work held in March 1879, the paintings that sold for the highest prices were his washerwomen and market scenes. The date on this painting has been read as both 1882 and 1883 but is probably correctly deciphered as the latter.

Supplementing his more elegant subjects of the 1860s (regattas, race courses, and the habitués of cabanas), Boudin took up new themes in the 1870s, often featuring working class and pastoral figures. While earlier artists, such as Honoré Daumier, J.F. Millet, and Boudin's contemporary, Edgar Degas, depicted washerwomen as socially disenfranchised figures burdened down by their chores, Boudin's anonymous laundresses express no clear social commentary. Their forms are inevitably subsumed by the landscape.

PROVENANCE: Acquired from Boudin on September 13, 1886, for 200F, by Galeries Durand-Ruel, Paris; sold to J. Eastman Chase of Boston in 1894; David P. Kimball, Boston, who presented it to the museum in 1923.

EXHIBITIONS: Chicago, The Art Institute of Chicago, *Loan Exhibition of Paintings by Eugène Boudin*, 1935–6, no. 25; Kansas City, MO, William Rockhill Nelson Gallery, *French Impressionists*, 1936, no. 5; Boston, Museum of Fine Arts, "Boudin in Boston," 1990.

LITERATURE: Benjamin 1937, p. 185, ill. pl. 144 (as dated 1882); Schmit 1973, vol. 2, no. 1731, ill. (as dated 1883); MFA, Boston, *Summary Catalogue* (1985), p. 28 (as dated 1882), ill.



LOUIS EUGENE BOUDIN

Washerwomen beside the Bridge over the River Touques, 1883

Signed and dated lower right: 83/E. Boudin

Oil on panel, 12 $\frac{3}{8}$ x 16 $\frac{1}{8}$ in. (32 x 41 cm.)

Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; bequest of David P.

Kimball in memory of his wife, Clara Bertram Kimball,
23.512

TROUVILLE, THE JETTIES, LOW TIDE, 1885

The jetties at the entrance to the port of Trouville extend on either side of the scene. Low tide exposes the sandy bottom. Several sailboats rest aground, and a small rowboat plies the shallows on the left.

Boudin painted over one hundred variations on the present scene. Executed during the 1880s and 1890s, these works in the aggregate depict the port at virtually all tidal levels (compare Schmit no. 1541, dated 1881, nos. 1902 and 1903, dated 1884, nos. 1915, 1917, and 1918, also dated 1885, nos. 2250, 2251, dated 1888, and no. 3570, dated 1896, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, no. 23.480).

Isabey had sojourned in Trouville with the landscapist Paul Huet as early as 1828, when Alexandre Dumas could describe the little fishermen's village on the right bank of the Touques as an "unknown beach." In 1836 Gustave Flaubert met his first love, Elisa Schlesinger, in Trouville. Boudin probably first arrived in town in 1860, by which time it was already becoming a fashionable seaside resort, in part because of the patronage of the duc de Morny (half brother of Napoleon II), who built up Deauville in the following decade. The high life and beauty of Trouville subsequently attracted many leading artists, including Courbet, Whistler, Manet, Degas, Monet (see *Sea Coast in Trouville*, 1881, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, no. 19.1314), and Gustave Caillebotte, many of whom depicted its shore and maritime activities. By 1890 the town was characterized by Baedeker's guide to Northern France as "the most fashionable watering-place on the coast of Normandy," and visitors were warned that it was "extremely expensive."

PROVENANCE: Paul Detrimont, Paris; Salles, Paris; Mr. and Mrs. Henry Walters, New York; Sale Mrs. Henry Walters, New York (Parke-Bernet), December 1, 1943, no. 1043 (\$1,700); Forsyth Wickes, Boston, who donated it to the museum in 1965.

EXHIBITION: New Haven, CT, Yale University Art Gallery, *Pictures Collected by Yale Alumni*, May 8, 1956–June 18, 1956, no. 75, ill. (lent by Forsyth Wickes).

LITERATURE: Schmit 1973, vol. 2, no. 1916, ill.; Boston, *Summary Catalogue* (1985), p. 29, ill.



LOUIS EUGENE BOUDIN

Trouville, The Jetties, Low Tide, 1885

Signed and dated lower left: E. Boudin-85

Oil on panel, 9 $\frac{3}{8}$ x 12 $\frac{1}{8}$ in. (23.7 x 32.7 cm.)

Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; The Forsyth Wickes
Collection, 65.2638

THE OUTER PORT OF LE HAVRE, C. 1885–90

A white-hulled bark flies the French tricolor under a bright Channel sky with fleecy clouds accented with white, blue, and grey.

Boudin depicted the port at Le Havre more than one hundred times. This painting has been dated by Schmit to the latter half of the 1880s. There are many related compositions (compare, for example, Schmit no. 3736, dated 1882, no. 1937, dated 1885, no. 2137, dated 1886, and the many undated examples, especially no. 2011). The English landscapist Richard Parkes Bonington had submitted a marine painting of Le Havre to the Salon as early as 1822, and Isabey (see PLATE I) returned to the port numerous times over a forty-year period. Jongkind painted there between 1847 and 1863, and Monet exhibited marine paintings of Le Havre at the Salon in 1862 and 1865.

Unlike Honfleur and the many other intimately scaled maritime sites that Boudin depicted along France's northern coast, Le Havre was a major harbor. In effect Paris's seaport, it was second in trade only to Marseille and a city of more than 110,000 inhabitants during the artist's lifetime.

PROVENANCE: Allard and Noël, Paris; Knoedler & Co., New York, 1894–98; with J. Eastman Chase, Boston, 1898; Elizabeth H. Bartol, Boston, who bequeathed it to the museum in 1927.

EXHIBITIONS: New York, Wildenstein, *From Paris to the Sea Down the River Seine*, 1943, no. 67; Cambridge, MA, Fogg Art Museum, 1943–4; Poughkeepsie, NY, Vassar College Art Gallery, 1955; Berkeley, CA, University of California Art Gallery, 1974; Atlanta, GA, High Museum of Art, Tokyo, Seibu Museum, Nagoya, Nagoya City Museum, Kyoto, National Museum of Art, and Denver, Denver Art Museum, *Corot to Braque: French Paintings from the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston* (catalogue by Anne Poulet and Alexandra Murphy), 1979–80, no. 25, ill.; Boston, Museum of Fine Arts, "Boudin in Boston," 1990.

LITERATURE: Benjamin 1937, p. 185; Schmit 1973, vol. 2, no. 2012, ill.; MFA, Boston, *Summary Catalogue* (1985), p. 29, ill.



LOUIS EUGENE BOUDIN

The Outer Port of Le Havre, c. 1885-90

Signed lower right: E Boudin

Oil on canvas, 15 $\frac{3}{8}$ x 21 $\frac{1}{8}$ in. (39.8 x 54.2 cm.)

Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; bequest of Elizabeth
Bartol, Res. 27.90

LE HAVRE, SHIPS AT A DOCK, 1887

In the early 1850s when Boudin first began painting marines, he sometimes collaborated with a little-known artist named Cassinelli, who was regarded as an expert at painting masts and ships' rigging. However, Boudin soon developed his own freer manner of painting ships, which better complemented his painterly evocation of the sea's atmosphere. Most of the artist's marines are horizontal in format, but beginning in the 1870s he occasionally employed upright compositions (see, for example, Schmit 1973, vol. 1, no. 957, dated 1874, and no. 1215, dated 1878), and he increasingly favored them after about 1880/81 (see, for example, Schmit no. 1533, dated 1881). The vertical design enhances the height of his handsome brigs as well as the soaring elevation of the vaulted skies overhead.

PROVENANCE: Adrien Lacroix, Toulouse; Sale Lacroix, Paris (Hotel Drouot), April 12, 1902, no. 7 (1,200F); with Chaine and Simonson, Paris, who in 1905 sold it to Vose Galleries, Boston; Frank Peabody, Boston; Amelia Peabody, Boston, bequeathed it to the museum in 1937.

EXHIBITIONS: Boston, Museum of Fine Arts, "Boudin in Boston," 1990.

LITERATURE: Schmit 1973, vol. 2, no. 2196; MFA, Boston, *Summary Catalogue* (1985), p. 29, ill.



LOUIS EUGENE BOUDIN

Le Havre, Ships at a Dock, 1887

Signed and dated lower right: E. Boudin/87

Oil on panel, 13 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 10 $\frac{3}{8}$ in. (35 x 26.5 cm.)

Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; gift of Miss Amelia
Peabody, 37.1212

VESSEL AT LOW TIDE, c. 1888–95

In an upright composition, a two-masted vessel with furled sails heels over at low tide. At the left another boat is moored to a jetty and at the right are several figures in two rowboats. In the distance smoke rises into the overcast sky.

The painting is not recorded in Schmit's extensive *catalogue raisonné*, but late in his career Boudin executed many similar paintings of vessels resting on their keels at low tide on the sandy bottom beside Trouville's jetties; compare Schmit 1973, vol. 2, no. 1389, c. 1880–5, no. 1917, dated 1885, no. 2365, c. 1888–95, no. 2842, dated 1891, nos. 3167 and 3168, dated 1893, no. 3631, dated 1897, and especially no. 2355, c. 1888–95. The last mentioned is a panel of the same size with a very similar design except that the vessel with furled sails heels to the right instead of the left.



LOUIS EUGENE BOUDIN

Vessel at Low Tide, c. 1888-95.

Oil on panel, 13¾ x 10¼ in. (35 x 26 cm.)

Private collection

HARBOR SCENE, c. 1885–95

A variation on one of Boudin's favorite views of sailing vessels along a wharf, this little painting exchanges the artist's sunny palette of blue and white for a more somber study in subtle shades of grey. The site of the painting has not been identified, but the work has been dated by Schmit to the later career, about 1888–95; it resembles numerous little studies of Le Havre and other unidentified ports from this period (compare, for example, the composition of Schmit 1973, vol. 2, no. 2292).

PROVENANCE: Allard and Noël, Paris; Galerie Raphaël Gérard, Paris; purchased in Europe late in the nineteenth century by Edward P. Bliss, Boston; by descent to Henry W. Bliss, Sr., then Jr.

EXHIBITIONS: Boston, Museum of Fine Arts, *Boudin in Boston*, 1990.

LITERATURE: Schmit 1973, vol. 2, no. 2291; Supplement (1984), p. 204; MFA, Boston, *Summary Catalogue* (1985), p. 29, ill.



LOUIS EUGENE BOUDIN

Harbor Scene, c. 1888–95

Signed lower right: E. Boudin

Oil on panel, 9 $\frac{1}{8}$ x 12 $\frac{1}{4}$ in. (23.3 x 32.4 cm.)

Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; gift of Mrs. Henry Bliss,
67.906

ENTRY TO THE PORT OF SAINT-VALÉRY-SUR-SOMME, 1891

On the left bank are the houses of Saint-Valéry and a few boats secured by the quay, while on the right smaller rowboats have been drawn up on a shore lined by green trees. Ducks appear in the immediate foreground, and overhead is a bright but cloud-filled sky.

Boudin first painted the tiny village of Saint-Valéry, on the Normandy coast between Dieppe and Berck, in 1885 and returned to it frequently during the early 1890s. Famous in France as William the Conqueror's point of embarkation in 1066 for England, Saint-Valéry is situated at the mouth of the Somme, where it empties into the English Channel. Eugène Delacroix, Jules Dupré, and Camille Corot all painted at Saint-Valéry. Especially effective for river views, the arching composition in the painting, with its backlit screen of trees, was also favored by Jongkind and the Impressionists Monet and Alfred Sisley.

PROVENANCE: Felix Gérard Fils, Paris; Joseph Hessel, Paris; Galeries Georges Petit, Paris; André Schoeller, Paris; private collection.

EXHIBITIONS: Paris, Galerie Schmit, *Exposition Eugène Boudin 1824–1898*, May 5–26, 1965, no. 92; Boston, Museum of Fine Arts, "Boudin in Boston," 1990.

LITERATURE: Jean-Aubry and Schmit 1968, ill. p. 220; Schmit, 1973, vol. 3, p. 89, no. 2805, ill.



LOUIS EUGENE BOUDIN

Entry to the Port of Saint-Valéry-sur-Somme, 1891

Signed and dated lower right: E. Boudin 91

Oil on canvas, 14 $\frac{1}{8}$ x 23 in. (36 x 58.5 cm.)

Private collection

QUAY AT VILLEFRANCHE, 1892

The rugged stone quay of the wharf of the Mediterranean port of Villefranche recedes diagonally to the right. In the distance are the fort, square-rigged ships, and long rowing boats.

Boudin first visited the Mediterranean coast in 1885 and returned frequently thereafter. In the 1890s, when he was in his seventies and finally revered as one of France's most accomplished painters, he spent his winters in the Midi, depicting Antibes, Beaulieu, Nice, Juan-les-Pins, and Villefranche.

Adjacent to Nice and Monaco, Villefranche was the subject of Boudin's work as early as his first sojourn in 1885. He painted many views of its stone quay, harbor, citadel, and mountainous environs between 1890 and 1894, but especially in 1892. In 1891 all of Boudin's submissions to the Salon had been of Channel subjects. In the following year four of his six submissions were paintings of Villefranche, and his *La Rade de Villefranche* was purchased by the French state. In *La Vie Artistique*, the critic Gustave Geffroy wrote that these images of Villefranche were "executed in the subtle style of patches of color bathed in a grey light that is characteristic of the artist." Even amidst the brilliant sunlight of the Mediterranean, Boudin moderated the sun's harshest effects. In 1892, the same year that Villefranche set the theme of his Salon entries, Boudin was awarded the Cross of the Légion d'Honneur—an honor that he had requested be given to the Dutchman Jongkind, who, however, had died of a stroke in 1891.

PROVENANCE: Acquired on May 10, 1892, for 800F from Boudin by Galeries Durand-Ruel, Paris, who sold it to Edward O. Wolcott of Colorado on March 22, 1899; Reverend William Wolcott, Lawrence, MA; Trustees of the White Fund, Lawrence, MA.

EXHIBITIONS: Paris, *Salon*, 1892, no. 145, ill. no. 132; New York, Galeries Durand-Ruel, *Paintings by the Late Eugène Boudin*, December 1898–January 1899, no. 36; Lawrence, MA, Public Library, *Paintings from the Collection of Rev. William E. Wolcott*, 1911, no. 7; Boston, Museum of Fine Arts, "Boudin in Boston", 1990.

LITERATURE: Benjamin 1937, p. 188; Schmit 1973, vol. 3, no. 1902, ill.; MFA, Boston, *Summary Catalogue* (1985), p. 30, ill.



LOUIS EUGENE BOUDIN

Quay at Villefranche, 1892

Signed and dated lower right: E. Boudin 92; inscribed:
Villefranche 27. fevr. 92

Oil on canvas, 19 $\frac{1}{8}$ x 29 $\frac{3}{8}$ in. (50.7 x 74.5 cm.)

On loan to the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; deposited
by the trustees of the White Fund, Lawrence, MA,
1322.12

TROUVILLE, LOW TIDE, 1893

PROVENANCE: Allard and Noël, Paris; sale "Collection de la Princesse de X...", Paris (Galerie Charpentier), December 2, 1952, no. 33, ill. (650,000 F).

EXHIBITION: Boston, Museum of Fine Arts, "Boudin in Boston" 1990.

LITERATURE: Schmit 1973, vol. 2, p. 390, no. 2338, ill.

A panorama depicts the seashore at low tide. Storm clouds threaten overhead and a downpour appears on the central horizon. Tiny figures, one holding an umbrella and another a fishing pole, stand in the shallows in the foreground and elsewhere on the beach. Farther back are other figures, a team of horses, and on the right, a figure by a boat.

When this painting sold in 1952 it was titled *Pêcheurs à marée basse* (Fishermen at Low Tide) and was said to be signed but undated. Schmit first identified the site as the beach at Trouville and catalogued it along with another panoramic view of the strand at low tide (Schmit 1973, vol. 2, no. 2338; formerly in Lady Kent's collection), as works of c. 1888–95. Although Boudin was in Trouville repeatedly in these years, the painting is in fact faintly dated (18)9[3?].

Boudin had begun painting beach scenes populated by the fashionably attired men and women who frequented Trouville in the 1860s (see PLATE VII). Those works usually employed horizontal compositions with a near view of the figures arranged across the scene and mostly obscuring the ocean. Here, a more expansively conceived, though still intimately scaled, panoramic effect is sought, with a low horizon and towering sky. The latter dwarfs the human presence but celebrates the grandeur of the weather.

At least as early as 1878, Boudin painted views of the beach at low tide in Trouville with figures hunting for shellfish and sand eels (see Schmit 1973, vol. 1, no. 1217; compare also his scenes of figures combing the beach at low tide at other sites; Schmit, vol. 1, no. 1360, and vol. 2, no. 2148, dated 1886). Another panorama of low tide at an unidentified site with fishermen is dated 1891 and is very close in conception to the Coolidge painting (see Schmit, *Supplement* [1984], no. 3799). The stormy aspect of the panoramic beach's sky attracted Boudin repeatedly in the 1890s when he executed several exceptionally painterly views of showers and squalls; compare, for example, *Stormy Sky over the Estuary at Le Havre* in the Musée des Beaux-Arts, Le Havre (Schmit 1973, vol. 3, no. 3018) and *Storm Effect, Trouville*, 1894, Paul Mellon, Upperville, Virginia (Schmit 1973, vol. 3, no. 3250).



LOUIS EUGENE BOUDIN

Trouville, Low Tide, 1893?

Signed and dated lower left: E. Boudin 9[3?]

Oil on canvas, 14¼ x 23¼ in. (36 x 59.5 cm.)

William A. Coolidge (on long-term loan to the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston)

VENICE, SANTA MARIA DELLA SALUTE FROM SAN GIORGIO, 1895

In the center is the church of Santa Maria della Salute in Venice. To the right is the tower of the Customs House and, beyond the entrance of the Grand Canal, the Campanile of San Stefano. To the left is the dome of San Simeone Piccolo. The scene is viewed from San Giorgio.

An essential stop on the "Grand Tour," Venice had been prescribed by art theorists since the Renaissance for students of painting seeking a heightened appreciation of light and color. Many of the French Impressionists made the traditional pilgrimage to Venice; Manet, Renoir, Monet, and others all painted Venetian subjects, while some lesser artists, like Felix Ziem, made them a specialty.

At the relatively advanced age of sixty-eight, Boudin made the first of three visits to Venice in 1892. He wrote home of the beauty of the city but observed with characteristic resignation, "I would need to be twenty years younger to make a useful sojourn here for me and my art. . . . I'm too tired for this rough labor that is painting," finally adding nostalgically that he longed to smell again "a puff of our Channel." Despite these misgivings, Boudin produced about seventy paintings of Venice in the three-year period from 1893 to 1895. These sparkling images of the ancient city and its monuments usually adopt a distant point of view in the tradition of Canaletto and Guardi, but are executed with a more animated touch that enlivens the sea and sky. Boudin's paintings of Venice apparently were well received; at the posthumous sale of the contents of his atelier in 1899, a Venetian painting fetched the highest price.

PROVENANCE: Allard and Noël, Paris; Juliana Cheney Edwards, Boston; Hannah, Mary, and Grace M. Edwards, Boston, bequeathed to the museum in 1925.

EXHIBITION: Paris, Ecole Nationale des Beaux-Arts, *Exposition des oeuvres d'Eugène Boudin*, 1899, no. 51; Boston, Museum of Fine Arts, *Juliana Cheney Edwards Collection*, 1939–40, no. 2 (*Bulletin of the Museum of Fine Arts*, vol. 37, no. 224 [December, 1939], p. 98); Atlanta, GA, High Museum of Art, Tokyo, Seibu Museum, Nagoya, Nagoya City Museum, Kyoto, National Museum of Modern Art, and Denver, Denver Art Museum, *Corot to Braque: French Paintings from the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston* (catalogue by Anne Poulet and Alexandra Murphy), 1979–80, no. 24, ill.; Boston, Museum of Fine Arts, "Boudin in Boston," 1990.

Literature: Benjamin, 1937, p. 185; Schmit 1973, vol. 3, no. 3397, ill.; MFA, Boston, *Summary Catalogue* (1985), p. 28, ill.



LOUIS EUGENE BOUDIN

Venice, Santa Maria della Salute from San Giorgio, 1895

Signed, inscribed and dated lower left: Venise 95/E.

Boudin

Oil on canvas, 18 $\frac{1}{4}$ x 25 $\frac{3}{4}$ in. (46.3 x 65.4 cm.)

Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; Juliana Cheney Edwards

Collection, 25.111

THE MARSHES AT DEAUVILLE, 1897

A broad panorama of the green marshes of Deauville at low tide features the spires and peaked roofs of the town on the left with the complimenting triangles of sailboats punctuating the horizon on the right. A few figures are daubed sketchily about. Overhead, tall clouds scud through the summer sky.

PROVENANCE: Mary H.J. Parker, Boston.

EXHIBITIONS: Shinjuku, Japan, Isetan Museum of Art, October 21–December 4, 1983, Fukuoka Art Museum, January 6–29, 1984, and Kyoto Municipal Museum of Art, February 25–April 8, 1984, *Masterpieces of European Painting from the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston*, no. 41, ill.; St. Petersburg, FL, Museum of Fine Arts, *French Marine Paintings of the Nineteenth Century*, March 16–May 5, 1985, p. 10, no. 13 (with the provenance confused with that of Schmit no. 3618); Boston, Museum of Fine Arts, “Boudin in Boston,” 1990.

LITERATURE: Schmit, *Premier Supplément* (1984) no. 3853, ill. (incorrectly dated August 16, 1897); MFA, Boston, *Summary Catalogue* (1985), p. 30, ill.

In his last decade, Boudin executed a series of relatively large panoramic views of the wide flat beach and marshes at Deauville, with the shore receding perpendicularly from the viewer, the city on the left, and the water on the right. The earliest of the group is dated 1890 (Schmit 1973, vol. 3, no. 2660) and closely related paintings were executed in October of 1893 (Schmit 1973, vol. 3, no. 3143), October of 1896 (Schmit 1973, vol. 3, no. 3585), and the summer of 1897 (Schmit 1973, vol. 3, no. 3646).

It is a testament not only to the speed and productivity of the artist but also to his concern with the specifics of time, weather, and place, that Boudin inscribed this work “Deauville” and dated it to the day, August 10, 1897. An almost identical view (Schmit no. 3618) with virtually the same dimensions (55 x 90 cm.) was dated three days later, August 13, 1897. Not surprisingly, the provenance of this second version (L. Bernard, Paris, 1901, and M. Milliken, Paris, 1908) has been confused with that of the painting owned by the Boston Museum of Fine Arts.



LOUIS EUGENE BOUDIN

The Marshes at Deauville, 1897

Signed and dated lower left: E. Boudin-97/Deauville;
inscribed: 10 Aout

Oil on canvas, 21 $\frac{5}{8}$ x 37 $\frac{3}{8}$ in. (55 x 95 cm.)

Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; bequest of Mary H.J.
Parker, 1981.719

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